1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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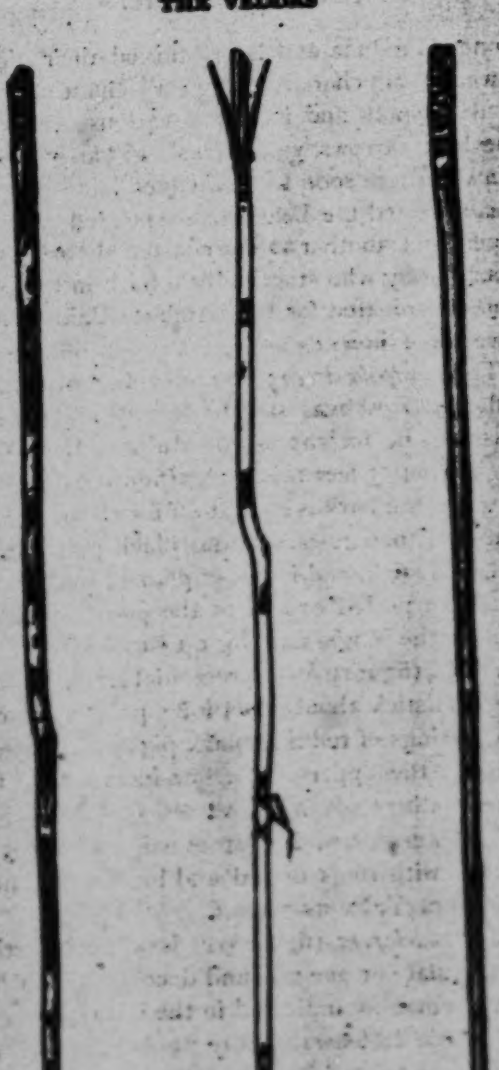

Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambure Vidu ceremony.
(a) Miniature Adze $\times \frac{1}{2}$. (b) Club $\times \frac{1}{10}$. (c) Miniature $\times \frac{1}{2}$.

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away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiye*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *maesa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaku* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaku* in the ordinary course of events.

The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *maesa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *maesa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaku*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *maesa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *A*, which is drawn

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[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a veiling cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

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Fig. 10. Conventional bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka. ⅛ fr.

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *mazza*, suspended by a creeper, is the *walawala*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *kurugala*, and salaamed to the *mazza*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. XXVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *mazza*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *mazza*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *walawala* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

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843 796 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony. This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

843 796 796 The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku. No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyahagunna* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

843 796 The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts, which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called [293] the *asmahaliya*, *madamahaliya* and *kalahawwa*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wiladeliya* or *kade* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *asamanda* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these